

SOME NEW AND OTHER RARE BIRDS FROM FERGUSSON ISLAND.

By ERNST HARTERT.

MR. ALBERT MEEK, an industrious young collector, sent a number of birdskins from Fergusson Island, D'Entrecasteaux Group, the home of *Paridisea decora*. Most of them belong to known species, previously recorded from the same group of islands or the neighbouring part of New Guinea, but some are not referable to previously described forms, or of special interest on account of their distribution.

1. *Pitta finschi* Rams. (?).

Two *Pittae* from Fergusson Island have the head deep rufous chocolate-brown, darker above, lighter on the sides of the head and on the chin, the rest of the upperside uniform blue; in other respects they are similar to *Pitta mackloti*. I am not quite sure whether they are referable to *P. finschi* (Rams., *Proc. Linn. Soc. N.S.W.*, ix., p. 864), but I should think they belong to it, as the description quite agrees with my birds, except that the back is not of the same colour as the breast, but much darker and duller; if not they are an undescribed species. *Pitta loriseae* Salvad. (*Ann. Mus. Civ. Genova*, xxix., 1890, p. 579, and Elliot, Monograph *Pittidae*, New Edition) seems to be quite similar, except that it has the back and stripe along the flanks green, while my two specimens have *no shade* of green. Like Salvadori, I am puzzled by Ramsay's remark that some green-backed specimens were *females* or *young*, though Finsch believed them to belong to *P. mackloti*, which is quite differently coloured on the nape. From the descriptions I should judge that the bird named *Pitta loriseae* by Salvadori is like the supposed green-backed specimens of *P. finschi* of Ramsay. Without comparing both Ramsay's and Salvadori's types it will be difficult to clear up this case entirely.

2. *Cyclopsittacus virago* sp. nov.

MAS.—*Cyclopsittaci aruensis* navi similis, sed macula anteoculari viridi (nec caerulea, ut in *C. aruensi*); macula infra genas coccineas caerulea genis totis fascia perfecta lilacino-caerulea cinctis in *C. aruensi*.

FEMINA. Genis caerulescentibus, sincipite caeruleo, fronte macula rotundata coccinea.

Magnitudine *Cyclopsittaci aruensis*.

Hab. Fergusson Island, D'Entrecasteaux Group, S.E. of New Guinea. Coll. Albert S. Meek.

ADULT MALE.—Above green, with a conspicuous golden yellow wash on the back. Below a little lighter and more grass-green. Sinciput, cheeks, and ear-coverts red; the red cheeks separated from the green of the neck by a blue spot, which in none of the nine *males* before me is developed into such a complete band as in *C. aruensis*. A green spot before the eye. Sinciput not separated from the

green upper surface by a distinct yellow band, but there is only an indicated, more or less concealed, line of yellow. Wings blackish; outer webs of primaries and primary coverts blue; this blue not so clear on the web of the first primary, but not altogether absent from it. Wings underneath with two pale yellow bands, one across the quills, the other across the greater under wing-coverts, which are otherwise blackish. Remainder of under wing-coverts green, blue along the outer edge of the wing. Sides of body yellow. A more or less concealed deep red spot on the inner webs of the two innermost great wing-coverts.

Total length about 15 cm. (6 inches); wing 84 to 87 mm. (3.3 to 3.45 inches); tail about 48 mm.; culmen 15 mm. Iris hazel (A. S. Meek).

ADULT FEMALE.—Everywhere like the *male*, except on the head. The sineiput is blue, in the midst of it a round spot of about 5 mm. (more or less) in diameter. Cheeks yellowish green, strongly washed with blue. Lores green. Size like the *male*. Iris dark hazel, feet grey (A. S. Meek). Bill horn-colour (in skin).

All the specimens were collected on Fergusson Island in September 1894.

The *male* of this pretty new little parrot is very similar to that of *C. aruensis* (Schleg.), hitherto only known from the Aru Islands and the middle of Southern New Guinea, along the Fly River (cf. Salvad., *Cat. B.*, xx., p. 97, and *Orn. Pap. e Mol.*, i., p. 161), but can easily be distinguished by the characters given in the diagnosis above.

The *female* differs entirely from the *female* of *C. aruensis* (which has no red on the head), and the red spot on the forehead makes it look much more male-like.

3. *Loriculus aurantiifrons meeki* subsp. nov.

Salvadori, in *Cat. B.*, xx., p. 538, has remarked that two *females* of *Loriculus aurantiifrons* Schleg. from S.E. New Guinea have longer wings than specimens from N.W. New Guinea, and that they want the reddish base to the feathers of the forehead. Mr. Albert Meek has now sent two *males* and three *females* from Fergusson Island. They all have a longer wing, *i.e.* 72 to 74 mm., than Arfak specimens, of which I measured five, none of which had a wing exceeding 68 mm. in length, and none of the *females* show a trace of red on the bases of the feathers on the forehead. I therefore believe it is justifiable to separate the south-eastern form of this pretty little parrot under a subspecific name as *L. aurantiifrons meeki*. The specimens before me were shot in September, and the iris of all of them is marked as "white."

4. *Ptilopus lewisii vicinus* subsp. nov.

Several specimens of a fine *Ptilopus* resemble very much *Ptilopus lewisii* Rams. hitherto known only from the Solomon Islands (cf. Salvad., *Cat. B.*, xxi., p. 153), but on carefully comparing, some differences are clearly obvious.

The purple-red patch of the lower throat and upper breast is not surrounded by such a distinct line of purple, this latter only being indicated. The purple-red patch itself is not quite so large in the new subspecies. The round delicate grey spots on the innermost greater wing-coverts are distinctly larger. The grey spot on the shoulder does not reach so far towards the margin of the wing as in *P. lewisii*; the grey throat is separated (more or less distinctly and broadly) from the purple-red

breast-patch by a green line, which I do not find even indicated in *P. lewisii*. Iris light red (A. Meek).

There are several specimens marked *females* by the collector, which are like the *males*, except that the purple-red breast-patch is remarkably smaller, and that the lower abdomen is more mottled with yellow, this latter, however, being also a sign of immaturity.

Measurements of the type *male*: total length about 21 cm.; wing 125 mm.; tail 64 mm.; tarsus 19 mm.; culmen 16 mm. Of the *female*: wing 123 mm.; tail 58 mm.

The specimens were collected in September and October on Fergusson Island, D'Entrecasteaux Group, S.E. New Guinea, by Mr. Albert S. Meek.

The above stated differences are very clear, but in one *male* the purplish line round the purple-red spot is rather broader, more like in *P. lewisii*.

This character therefore not seeming to be absolutely constant, it is advisable to consider the new form a subspecies rather than a species.

It is remarkable that this pigeon should be so closely allied to *P. lewisii*, an inhabitant of the Solomons, and not (hitherto) recorded from anywhere else. It cannot be surprising that forms hitherto only known from the Louisiade Archipelago occur on the D'Entrecasteaux Islands, as well as others which seem distributed over New Ireland, New Britain, and the Solomons—in short, the islands east of New Guinea; but I did not so much expect there forms like or nearest allied to the Solomon Island species.

Ptilopus lewisii vicinus is easily distinguished from *P. musschenbroeki* Schleg. by the breast being darker and more purple, the wing being longer, there being a purplish line more or less visible round the purple-red breast, of which no trace is found in *P. musschenbroeki*, and by the grey spot on the shoulder and innermost greater upper wing-coverts still being smaller.*

Besides, the *female* of *P. musschenbroeki* is said to differ entirely from the *male* (cf. Salvad., *Cat. B.*, xxi., p. 153), while apparently in *P. lewisii* and its subspecies *P. vicinus* the sexes differ not so much from each other. Count Salvadori does not (*Cat. B.*, xxi., p. 153) describe both sexes, but merely says "adult"; but Ramsay (*Journ. Linn. Soc. Zool.*, xvi., p. 431, 1881) had a *female*, which he, at the time, believed to be the *female* of *P. eugeniæ* (Gould). Grant (*P. Z. S.*, 1887, p. 332; 1888, p. 199) and others mention having had *females*, but do not describe them. The Tring Museum possesses a bird shot at Fauro, Shortland Islands, Solomon Group, and sexed *female* by the collectors (Walnes and Ribbe, November 21st, 1893), which looks exactly like *males* collected (and marked ♂) by Mr. Woodford on Guadalcanar. Walnes and Ribbe give the native name as "Bubuako," the iris as red, the bill as yellow, feet red; Woodford (on the label) the iris as *yellow*. The iris of all the Fergusson Island specimens is given as light red or red.

5. *Carpophaga salvadorii* Tristr.

Several specimens from Fergusson Island agree with specimens from St. Aignan. This species was not with certainty recorded from anywhere else but from the Louisiade Archipelago (see Salvad., *Cat. B.*, xxi., p. 224). Mr. Meek describes the iris as red, the feet also as red.

* I cannot see any difference in the colour of the forehead in our specimen of *P. musschenbroeki* (Bruijn coll.) and our *P. lewisii* and *P. lewisii vicinus*.

6. *Chalcophaps stephaniae* Rehb.

One *male*, Fergusson Island, October 9th; iris hazel; not distinguishable from specimens from New Guinea, New Ireland, Duke of York, etc.

Salvadori (*Cat. B.*, xxi., p. 522) separates *Ch. mortoni* Rams. from *Ch. stephani*, though apparently after some hesitation, having examined one *female* only. There is in the Tring Museum one adult *male* from Aola, Guadalcanar. Having closely examined it, I came to the conclusion that it differs from *Ch. stephani* only by a decidedly longer wing and a *slightly* larger white forehead. It is true the white on the forehead is a little more extended on the crown, but this varies somewhat in *Ch. stephaniae*. The wing of the Guadalcanar bird measures 153 mm., while in seven specimens of *Ch. stephaniae* it does not exceed 140 mm., and in two from New Britain and New Ireland it measures 143. The bill of the Guadalcanar bird is perhaps a little stouter, and the abdomen paler, but this is closely approached by the *male* from New Britain, and I do not think it is of any consequence. Under these circumstances I should only deem the Solomon Islands bird worthy of subspecific rank, and term it:—

Chalcophaps stephaniae mortoni.A NEW *PRIONOCHILUS* FROM THE PHILIPPINES
AND NOTE ON AN *ANTHREPTES*.

By ERNST HARTERT.

MR. A. EVERETT has sent to the Tring Museum some excellently prepared bird-skins from *North Mindoro* and the neighbourhood of *Manila, Luzon* (Laguna de Bai). Unfortunately our friend was very soon prevented from continuing his researches in those islands, by a serious accident which befell him, and made necessary his return to Labuan. But even the small collection he was able to make in a very short time contains a novelty and some rare species in fine series.

1. *Prionochilus inexpectatus* sp. nov.

Prionochilus, supra atro-chalybaeus, subtus medio albo, lateribus pectoris corporisque cinereis; rostro pedibusque nigris. Femina differt a mare, supra olivaceo-virescente, capite colloque grisescente, subtus grisea, paullum olivaceo-virescente lavata, abdomine medio albo.

Long. tot. ♂ c. 75 mm., al. ♂ 52 to 53 mm., ♀ 50, culm. 9, caud. 26, tars. 14.

Hab. Luzon, Mindoro. A. Everett coll.

Typus in Museo Tring.

ADULT MALE.—Above deep blackish steel blue, wings black, feathers at base dark grey. Chin, throat, a line along the middle of the breast and abdomen, under tail-coverts, axillaries, under wing-coverts, and inner webs of quills, with the exception of their apical portion, pure white. Sides of breast and body delicate grey. Thighs white in front, black behind. The bases of the feathers of the underparts slate-colour. Wing 52 to 53 mm. (2.05 to 2.1 inches).

FEMALE.—Above olive green, much more grey on the hind-neck and head. Below pale grey with a slight olive green wash; middle of abdomen, axillaries, and under wing-coverts white. The *female* is smaller than the *male*, with the wing only 50 mm. (1.96 inch). Its iris is orange brown, its bill dark brown, base ochreous, legs blackish.

After so many collections having come to Europe from the neighbourhood of Manila, Luzon, I am indeed surprised to find that this pretty new bird was found near Manila as well as on the island of Mindoro, but the number of specimens, all carefully dated and mostly also sexed by Mr. Everett himself, leave no doubt as to the localities they came from.

Prionochilus bicolor, quite recently described by Messrs. Bourns & Worcester, on p. 20 of their *Preliminary Notes on the Birds and Mammals Collected by the Menage Scientific Expedition to the Philippine Islands* (Vol. 1., No. 1, of *Occasional Papers of the Minnesota Academy*, dated December 8th, 1894, but apparently not issued before January 1895), must be very similar to my new bird, but it is described as *quite white below*, has a shorter wing, and was found on a different island, *i.e.* the hills back of Ayala, near Zamboanga, South Mindanao. *P. olivaceus* Tweedd. (*Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist.*, xx., p. 536, 1877; *id.*, *P. Z. S.*, 1878, p. 111, Pl. viii., fig. 3; Sharpe, *Cat. B.*, x., p. 75) has a longer wing, a whiter throat, lighter lores, and the sexes are said to be similar in colour. It was found on the island of Dinagat.

In the key to the genera of the *Dicaeidae** two sections are made, one "with a distinct bastard primary," one with "no bastard primary." *Dicaeum* is included in the latter section, *Prionochilus* in the former. In *Prionochilus*, however, as limited by Sharpe, I find a number of species without a bastard primary, and among them my *P. inexpectatus*. If the absence or presence of a distinct bastard primary is a good generic character, the species without a distinct bastard primary must either be united with *Dicaeum*, or be kept generically distinct under the name of *Pachyglyssa* Blyth. The former course may perhaps better be followed, for the bills of the species of the genus *Dicaeum*, as limited in the *Catalogue of Birds*, vary very much, from a long and slender bill to a short and stout one, which in stoutness and shortness does not remain far behind the bills of several species of *Prionochilus*.

2. *Anthreptes griseigularis* Tweedd.

This rare species of sunbird was formerly only known from Mindanao and Sakuyok. After an interval of seventeen years, during which it was never recorded, Mr. Whitehead obtained a *male* in the mountains of the province of Isabella, in the extreme north-east of Luzon. Therefore Mr. Ogilvie Grant, *Ibis*, 1895, p. 111, expressed his belief that "probably this bird is met with only at considerable elevations, which may account for its occurrence in such widely separated localities as North Mindanao and North Luzon." This theory, however, breaks down since Everett's men procured two splendid specimens at Laguna de Bai, in the low country near Manila.

This fact and the discovery of the new *Prionochilus* (or *Dicaeum*), described above, seems to show that, in spite of the energetic collecting of birds in the Philippine Archipelago carried out recently so successfully by Americans and Europeans, something still remains to be done there.

* *Cat. B.*, x., p. 2.